

Abstract

Background:

This study was about factors influencing the utilization of maternal health care health care services: a case study of among expectant and breast feeding mothers living in Namuwongo Bukasa parish, Makindye division, Kampala.

Objective:

The general objective was to assess the factors influencing utilization of maternal health care services by mothers in Namuwongo Bukasa parish, while the specific objectives of the study were;

- I. To identify factors influencing the utilization of maternal health care services by mothers in Namuwongo – Bukasa Parish.
- II. To identify the Socio – Economic factors influencing the utilization of maternal health care services by mothers in Namuwongo – Bukasa Parish.
- III. To identify the Health system factors influencing the utilization of maternal health services by mothers in Namuwongo – Bukasa Parish.

Methods:

A cross sectional study design was undertaken whereby on spot data was collected from pregnant and breastfeeding mothers using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study population was sampled purposively and the data was collected by research assistants who were trained on data collected techniques, they physically made contact with the respondents in Namuwongo and administered the questionnaires, only pregnant and breastfeeding mothers who consented in the study participated in the study. Three research tools were prepared and a pretest of the tools was done and the final data collected in a period of approximately six days and exported SPSS. The data was reviewed, cleaned and entered in Ms Excel for analysis. Selected individuals, socio economic and Health system factors were analyzed using frequency tables graph and a pie chart, and chi square that were used to conclude relationships that existed between the dependent (utilization of maternal health services) and

independent (individual, socio economic and Health system factors) variables.

Results:

Apart from age at conception under individual factors, mother's education level, marital status, employment status, birth order were found to be responsible for utilization of maternal health services. Among socio economic factors, religious faith, husbands support, culture/religion did have influence on utilization of maternal health services. In Health system factors, distance to health facility, availability of health workers, health services and supplies and attitudes of health workers have influence on utilization of maternal health services. The assessment findings should be merged with the recommendations in this research so as to add to efforts aimed at utilization of maternal health services.

Recommendations:

Recommendation based on the findings from this research were also made, these include Increasing girl child education at least up to secondary level in all regions of the country. Provision of opportunities for employment and poverty reduction especially in the slummy areas like Namuwongo. Increasing availability and accessibility of maternal health centres to rural women in all the regions of the country. Campaigns against social norms that are harmful to women's health such as early marriage and high parity in the north; and stigmatization of unwed teenage mothers in the south.

Education programs to women of Islamic and traditionalist beliefs on the importance of MHCS utilization. These programs can be routed through religious and traditional/community leaders. The service providers need to be sensitized more on the value of listening to the clients, and that they should create a supportive environment in which clients are sufficiently informed, confident and encouraged to voice their opinions as well. This will help to strengthen the client-service provider relationship, enhance client's satisfaction and therefore help to improve the use of postnatal services.

Increase the salaries of health workers and create conducive environments so that they are motivated to serve their clients well.